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EASTERN EUROPE

Indications of Changed Emphasis in Communist Strategy

The Kremlin's concern over the present position of the Communist program abroad -- particularly in central and western Europe -- is reflected in a recent PRAVDA article commemorating the 30th anniversary of Lenin's "April Theses." The article appears designed as a guide to foreign Communist Parties in combatting the US program of aid to countries threatened by Communism and the competition of non-Communist liberals for working-class support -- considerations which the Kremlin apparently believes are sapping the revolutionary strength of the proletariat.

The PRAVDA article compares the current world situation with conditions in Russia in April 1917, when the Revolution threatened to terminate in a parliamentary democracy. Lenin, recognizing the numerical weakness of the Bolsheviks, urged that open rupture with the Provisional Government be avoided until the Bolsheviks achieved sufficient power to overthrow the Government and replace it with the Bolshevik-dominated Soviets (local councils). Instead Lenin urged (1) a revitalization and consolidation of the Party; (2) an intensified propaganda campaign against the Provisional Government and those leftist elements which showed a tendency toward compromise; and (3) increased efforts to gain control of the Soviets through legitimate and conspiratorial means. (Until that time, the Soviets were loosely-organized leftist groups with mass support but without centralized leadership.)

The current applicability of this strategy to central Europe -- where the Communists are delicately balanced between success and failure -- is obvious. In accordance with Lenin's program and experience during the Russian Revolution, the Kremlin apparently proposes for countries such as France and Italy: (1) intensive agitation against their present governments and against non-Communist liberals; and (2) the development of highly-disciplined Communist cores which, at the proper moment, could assume control. Such a program is well-adapted to the current situation in France where, relieved of governmental responsibility, the Communists are in a position to threaten (by propaganda, subversion, and trade-union agitation) the stability of the present Government. Where Communism is less powerful, the Kremlin

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desires to concentrate on gaining control of trade unions and other liberal organizations. Current Soviet propaganda evidently envisages the World Federation of Trade Unions as a primary vehicle of Soviet ideological expansion.

The Politburo apparently has decided that the time has come for an all-out offensive, aimed at capturing the leadership of the working class, neutralizing the influence of non-Communist liberals, and discrediting "capitalist attraction and deception of the masses."

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